

In the Drawings:

Final figures are presented in Appendix A.

REMARKS

Claims 1-7, and 12-33 are pending in this application. Claims 1 and 28 are in independent form. Claims 2-7, 12-27, and 33 depend from claim 1, and claims 29-32 depend from claim 28. Claims 1-4 and 27 have been amended and claims 28-33 are new. Claims 8-11 have been cancelled. No new matter has been entered. In addition, the drawings have been formalized and a copy is attached in Appendix A.

The Examiner rejected the specification because applicant failed to include a TM symbol with the word Velcro. The specification has been amended to properly identify the trade names for both Velcro and Scotchguard. In addition, applicant corrected a typographical error. No new matter has been entered.

In the office action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-10, 12, 13, 15, 17, 18, and 23-27 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,226,456 to Semak. Other claims were rejected either alone or in combination based upon U.S. Patent No. 5,933,914 to Beane and U.S. Patent No. 5,095,576 to Galigan. Claim 1 has been amended to include "means for carrying the sleeve" and new claim 28 requires a handle. Semak does not provide any teachings regarding a means to carry a sleeve or the claimed handle. In Semak, a sheet of material is sewn to form a primary tube that is configured to house a lightweight hose. Then a seam is sewn along the edge of the primary tube to define a secondary tube, or series of tubes, that run alongside the primary tube. A cord is positioned inside the secondary tube(s) to suspend the primary tube along a uniform gradient. The hose that is suspended by the primary tube is light weight and used to drain matter from a tank. The function of the sleeve is to statically "suspend [a hose] and to impart a substantially uniform gradient thereto" See '456 Semak, col. 7, ll. 5-6. Suspension is achieved by the cord between at least two stationary objects until achieving a gradient.

In contrast, the present application discloses a means in the form of a strap coupled to the exterior of the tube of material. The strap is used to carry and move the heavy suction hose from one place to another, and is strong enough and configured to allow a user's hand to grab the strap. In contrast, Semak teaches a tube that is 2" in height that the Examiner is equating with the applicant's handle. See '456 Semak, col. 4, ll. 38-39. This 2" tube is not capable of being grasped by a user's hand, as with the presently amended claims. The claimed handles in claims 1 and 28 are clearly different from the supporting tubes in Semak. The supporting tubes in Semak would not be utilized to carry the tube around and are only provided to support the lightweight

hose during its prescribed usage. Accordingly, the claims are distinguishable from Semak. In addition, neither Beane nor Galigan teaches or suggests a handle coupled to their hose covers for use in carrying a suction hose.

Based upon these differences, applicants submit that the claims are neither anticipated nor obvious in view of the cited prior art.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider this application with a view towards allowance. The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney if a telephone call could help to resolve any remaining issues.

No fees are believed to be due with the submission of this Amendment, other than a fee for the two additional dependent claims. Should any other fees be required, the Commissioner is authorized to charge such fees to deposit account No. 50-1432.

Respectfully submitted,



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